



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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COUNTY PRESERVATION PLAN GETS \$5.2 MILLION GRANT *Money to be used for Multiple Species Conservation Program*

The County of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) will receive a \$5,184,000 grant from the Federal Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund to continue the planning and implementation of this open space preserve plan.

The Conservation Fund enables States to work with private landowners, conservation groups and other agencies to initiate conservation-planning efforts. It also allows states to acquire and protect habitats to support the conservation of threatened and endangered species.

Grant monies will fund two portions of the MSCP plan.

About \$184,000 will be spent on planning the East County portion of the MSCP. The East San Diego County Plan will cover about 1,551,600 acres and presents a significant opportunity to provide for conservation of numerous listed and non-listed species, including the bald eagle, least Bell's vireo, Laguna Mountain skipper, Quino checkerspot butterfly and Stephens' kangaroo rat. The County is partnering with other local agencies, as well as various federal and state agencies, to develop this plan.

The remainder of the grant, about \$5 million, will go for acquisition and conservation of land that would significantly complement the MSCP preserve and improve opportunities for wildlife movement and benefit numerous animals and plants, including least Bell's vireo, San Diego thornmint, arroyo toad, coastal California gnatcatcher and southwestern willow flycatcher.

The goal of the MSCP is to maintain and enhance biological diversity in the region and maintain viable populations of endangered, threatened, and key sensitive species and their habitats. Its goal is also to promote regional economic viability through streamlining the land use permit process – a significant benefit to landowners – as well. To date, more than 90,000 acres have been preserved within the MSCP area. For more information on the MSCP, please visit www.mscp-sandiego.org.

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